

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1037
INFO AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAN JOSE 2001

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, NI
SUBJECT: ASSISTANT SECRETARY TODMAN'S MEETING WITH FOREIGN
MINISTER OF NICARAGUA

1. ASSISTANT SECRETARY TODMAN MET PRIVATELY WITH NICARAGUAN
FOREIGN MINISTER QUINTANA DURING PRE INAUGURAL ACTIVITIES MAY 7.
ALSO PRESENT WERE NICARAGUAN AMBASSADOR LACAYO AND POLOFF.

2. QUINTANA OPENED CONVERSATION WITH DISCUSSION OF GON
RATIONAL FOR MAY 5 OAS SPECIAL MEETING IN WASHINGTON.
QUINTANA MADE CLEAR THAT GON OBJECTIVE WAS TO LET CARAZO
GOVERNMENT KNOW THAT GON WILL HOLD GOCR RESPONSIBLE FOR
ANY FSLN ATTACKS ORIGINATING IN COSTA RICA EVEN THOUGH THEY
ACKNOWLEDGE THAT GOCR DOES NOT SPONSOR SANDINISTA
ACTIVITIES HERE. QUINTANA MENTIONED FSLN INDOCTRINATION
AND MILITARY TRAINING CENTERS, ACCEPTING EXISTENCE OF LATTER
AS FACT DESPITE FACIO'S DISCLAIMED.

3. IN GENERAL DISCUSSION OF HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATIONS,
POSSIBILITY OF IAHRV VISIT TO NICARAGUA WAS RAISED.
QUINTANA STATED THAT GON MIGHT RESPOND FAVORABLY TO IAHRV
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REQUEST TO VISIT NICARAGUA IN NEAR FUTURE, BUT FOR
PRESENT HE FEARED A POSSIBLE NEGATIVE IMPACT ON THE
DOMESTIC POLITICAL SITUATION. ASST. SEC. URGED FORMIN
TO ISSUE INVITATION NOW TO IAHRV TO VISIT NICARAGUA
SO THAT PROCESS COULD BEGIN FOR AN EARLY MUTUALLY
ACCEPTABLE DATE TO BE WORKED OUT
SST.

SECRETARY CITED EXAMPLES OF IAHRC VISITS TO A NUMBER OF LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES WITH NO NEGATIVE EFFECT AND NOTED THAT EVEN CHILEANS ARE NEGOTIATING POSSIBILITY OF INVITATION TO UN HRC. AFTER SOME HESITATION

QUINTANA RESPONDED FAVORABLY TO ASST. SECRETARY'S PRESENTATION, PROMISED TO BRIEF PRESIDENT SOMOZA FULLY, AND NOTED THAT WE COULD WELL RECEIVE "ASPLEASANT SURPRISE" IN THIS REGARD.

4. FORMIN EXPLAINED THAT WITH PRESIDENT SOMOZA'S BLESSING HE HAS BEEN IN CONTACT WITH A NUMBER OF OPPOSITION ELEMENTS IN NICARAGUA AND HOPED THAT SOME RESPONSIBLE UNITED CONSERVATIVE OPPOSITION CAN BE FORMED. TODMAN STATED THAT ONLY BINDING FORCE AMONG OPPOSITION APPEARED TO BE ANTIPATHY TO SOMOZA AND SUPPRESSED DOUBT THAT TYPE OF UNITY FORMIN WAS DESCRIBING COULD PROSPER. ASST. SECRETARY SPOKE OF NEED FOR A PERIOD IN NICARAGUA DURING WHICH ALL POLITICAL FORCES CAN ORGANIZE THEMSELVES TO LAY BASES FOR THE POLITICAL CHANGES OF THE FUTURE. FORMIN SAID HE APPRECIATED ASST. SECRETARY'S OBSERVATIONS, WHICH HE PROMISED TO CONVEY TO PRESIDENT SOMOZA. AMBASSADOR LACAYO LATER PRIVATELY THANKED AMB. TODMAN FOR DISABUSING FOREIGN MINISTER OF IDEA OF VIABILITY OF ANY "OPPOSITION UNITY" WHICH MIGHT RECEIVE BLESSING OF SOMOZA GOVERNMENT.
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5. IN SEPARATE CONVERSATION, HONDURAN VICE FORMIN POLICARPIO CALLEJAS SAID THAT HONDURANS HAD TOLD SOMOZA THAT HE SHOULD FIND SOMEONE ACCEPTABLE TO HIM AND TO THE OPPOSITION TO HEAD UP PREPARATIONS FOR A NEW GOVERNMENT.

6. IN LATER PRIVATE CONVERSATION, PRESIDENT ODUBER SAID HE IS PREPARING TO RECOMMEND TO SOMOZA THAT SOMOZA CONSIDER A TRANSITION GOVERNMENT WITH QUINTANA AS HEAD. (ODUBER SAYS HE WILL TRAVEL TO NICARAGUA IN A FEW WEEKS.) ODUBER STATED THAT QUINTANA IS A STRONG PERSONALITY WHO WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE TO THE OPPOSITION.
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